

So what is this play? To show a paranoid Pope who is so paranoid that when 100,000 children gather in Vatican Square, he decides that this is a plot by condom manufacturers to embarrass the Catholic church. So he goes berserk in a paranoid way. So then a nun, who happens to be a little witch dressed up in a nun's outfit, kidnaps the Pope. They give a heroin needle, an insertion into the Pope whose head then clears up and he starts to distribute free heroin needles, advocate the legalization of drugs, and promote the distribution of birth control throughout the world now that the witch has helped him understand that drugs are a positive influence and birth control is a positive influence.

I am sure glad that our tax dollars are used to fund a theater that puts out something that bigoted against the Catholic church of the United States. Can you imagine if any theater in America did anything that bigoted against African Americans, against Jews, against many groups in America, but it is still okay to pick on and discriminate and insult Catholics who believe the Pope is a direct lineage from the original apostles and speaks for the Church and for God. That is okay. That is okay to give money to those theaters.

Now, Republicans and Democrats in this body and the Presidential candidates in both parties are busy saying, "Hollywood's bad. We need to clean up Hollywood. They have terrible things on TV." You heard me describe some of the terrible things that we are indirectly funding, the stages, the actors, the promotions, the lights, the overhead in these theaters with your tax dollars. Hollywood's dollars are their own. I want to clean up Hollywood, too. But how dare Members of Congress stand on this floor and in particular in the other body and say Hollywood is bad when we fund this here. How can you do that? Will the American voters look at us and say, "Man, you guys aren't very consistent there?"

We really do need to clean up America. People have a right to free speech. We can try to advocate what to do in the free speech arena, but we do not have to fund the speech. The court has already ruled that an artist does not have the right to be publicly subsidized. That is a privilege, not a right. It is something to build on, to uplift, to preserve. We have theaters and art museums and philharmonics that are drowning because they do not have enough money. We have places all through the Midwest and the West and the Plains and the South and little cities and little towns that need art funding.

But, no, we give it to these places that insult our basic values in America. It is beyond and it defies belief how those people can defend this type of funding. I hope that before the Interior

bill comes to the floor, a few people can see the light of day and work with our House leadership that has been steadfast in trying to work with rules. We have held out a compromise. We are not asking to eliminate NEA. We are not asking to cut NEA. We are actually willing to put more money into arts.

But I stand here before you and say there is nothing more important in my life than God. People can mock that. They can disagree with me. But if it was not for Jesus Christ, I believe that I would be lost. And I have a right to not have my tax dollars and my government do gratuitous insults to everything I believe, making my Lord and Savior a homosexual who is having affairs with the apostles when there is no historical evidence, when it is made up merely to rub it into my soul, so to speak.

As a Catholic, you have the right not to have your tax dollars insult the Pope and undermine him directly or indirectly. I am not arguing it is directly. I am arguing it is indirectly. I will make this point again. Do not play games with us. You will hear people stand up in the coming debate most likely and say that these things were not direct funded. I did not assert that they were direct funded. What I asserted was these are mostly repertory theaters. I am a business person. I understand the difference between variable, fixed and mixed costs. When you get a grant, some of that grant goes directly for the play, some of it goes to cover the overhead of the theater and some of it goes to cover what they call mixed costs that vary some with the thing. When you only have four plays in a season and we fund one of them, it is a disproportionate covering of your cost. Do not play games and tell the American people you are not funding these kind of plays. If you fund those theaters, you are funding those kind of plays.

We need the arts in America. We need the National Endowment for the Arts to stand up and say there is good art. We need to promote good art. We have a program called FAME in northeast Indiana that gets some NEA funds, where school kids all over our district in high schools, elementary and junior high kids touch into art and produce good and beautiful art. They do not produce the type of obscene things that we are funding here. Why do we not fund that? We fund the first chair in one of our philharmonic positions in the Fort Wayne Philharmonic so they can go out and teach music in the school and it helps our philharmonic to have a stronger first chair. That is a good use of art.

Why do we have to fund a homosexual Christ? Let them find the funding for that. If that theater wants to challenge the principles and the foundations upon which this country is and insult the religious beliefs of the ma-

jority of America, let them go raise the money to do it. Why do they have to get public money?

Members can tell I am very frustrated. It is hard for me to do this, because I have a number of things I have worked very hard for in this appropriations bill. We have worked hard for weeks to come up with a compromise. I am very disappointed that we are at this point where not only did the other body say that they would not even consider our last offer but then went and tried to blame it on the Conservative Action Team. A press release went out saying the Conservative Action Team signed off on this. We did not. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG) has written the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. REGULA) about that. The leadership understands it. They are trying to address that. But misinformation went out and when we tried to work out an agreement that I have defined here, they turned that on us.

It is very frustrating. I am sorry that I have been so upset. I am sorry even that I had to read some of the graphic materials that I did. But sometimes as a Congressman, even if it is not in your best interest, you have to say, am I so compromised that I am unwilling to speak about things that matter most to my soul, matter most to my life? And am I so worried about every grant that I might get in some appropriations bill or that I might tick somebody off if I say these kinds of things, or that there might be retaliation later that I will not even speak out for the things that are most important to me, most important to my family, and that is my Lord and Savior.

I stand here today as someone who worked hard to come up with a compromise with others and I am deeply disappointed at the attitudes. I hope people will be held accountable and you will not let them off by trying to do a slide or by trying to say Hollywood is bad when we in fact are funding this type of activity indirectly through the Federal Government.

EDUCATION IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. QUINN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is recognized for the remainder of the 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about education. I want to talk about the Department of Education. I want to spend a little bit of time talking about our kids. And I want to spend a little bit of time talking about where we go from here.

The fastest growing program on our college campuses today is not computers, it is not high tech, it is not science and math. It is not foreign language. It is not political science. The

fastest growing program on college campuses today is remedial education. It means that our young people who are graduating from high school are entering college without the basic skills necessary to complete the work in their colleges.

We have been embarked on a program where we have had the opportunity to go around the country and visit 20 States and talk to educational leaders. In some of these hearings, we have had the opportunity to listen to our college presidents and deans on our college campuses. They came in and they said, "The most important thing you are doing for us, and make sure you don't decrease, as a matter of fact, make sure you increase funding for it, is increased funding for remedial education." After I heard this a few times, it is kind of like, you ask the question, you say what do you mean, what do you need remedial education dollars for on our college campuses? These are some of the best schools in America and you have got standards for the young people coming in. And they said, "Yes, but we've got a lot of people who we are admitting who are not functionally literate at an eighth grade level in reading, writing or math."

So the comment then became, we need the money to bring these kids up to the basic levels, and we forgot to ask the first question, which is, why are you not engaged with the people at the K-12 level to solve the problem at the K-12 level rather than accepting that as a condition and saying, "We're now going to see this as an opportunity for growth, to grow our programs on college campuses." But it is a symptom that says, we are not doing a good enough job at the K-12 level.

Another symptom is outlined in a document that has been prepared, it is called America's Education Recession. It outlines a couple of things that we need to be concerned about. It says that our young people not only as they enter college do a number of them need remediation, but it also says that when you test our kids at the 4th grade, 8th grade and 12th grade levels, they are not at grade proficiency, meaning they are not learning what we have expected them to learn by the time they are in the grade where we are testing them.

In America's highest poverty schools, 68 percent of fourth graders could not read at basic level in 1998 as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Students scoring below the basic fourth grade level were unable to read a simple children's book. That is our fourth graders.

The problem is that we see that in math as well as in reading. So we know that the fastest growing programs in our colleges are remediation. We know that our kids are not testing well when it comes to basic proficiencies. The question then comes up, how well do our kids perform when we compare

them to international standards? Or how well do our kids measure up to kids in other industrialized countries? What we find is in study after study, our kids do not measure up. In the math and science area, the Third International Math and Science Study, we compared American students with other students in industrialized countries. In math and science, we score 18 out of 21.

Who scores higher? The Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Iceland, Norway, France, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, Austria, Slovenia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Russian Federation, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, and then we have the United States. We are seeing enough symptoms that are saying we do have an education recession in America. An education recession does not say that all of our kids are doing poorly. What it does say is that we are leaving too many of our young people behind and we are leaving them behind in an area where we cannot afford to leave any child behind.

We have to have every young person in America developed to their fullest potential. We cannot afford to leave any child behind. Not only can we not afford it, but more importantly it is not the right thing to do. The right thing to do is to make sure that every one of our young people has the opportunity to succeed through the learning process.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for the Department of Education, we have had the opportunity to travel around the country to gather these statistics but also to take a look at educational programs that work and educational programs that do not. I will talk a little bit about those a little bit later, but going out into the grassroots and taking a look at our kids, our schools, our teachers and meeting with administrators and parents, we see lots of exciting things happening in education. But I am also tasked with taking a look at what is going on in the Department of Education, and is the Department of Education fostering innovation? Is the Department fostering excellence in our educational system?

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In some cases, it is a barrier.

If we take a look at this chart right here, it does again give us some reason to be concerned. The title of the chart is "Show me the money." The problem is that we in Congress allocate and appropriate money to the different agencies. One of those agencies is the Department of Education.

The Department of Education, let me just scale it for you, is about a \$40 billion agency. That is how much we give the Department roughly each and every year to help administer and to help our kids at a local level achieve

their educational goals. In addition to that, they manage a loan portfolio of about \$100 billion. So it is about a \$140 billion agency.

The disturbing thing is that for the last 2 years, this agency has not been able to get a clean audit from the independent auditors that come in and take a look at this agency, look at its numbers, look at its policies and procedures to determine whether how they report the money being spent is actually the way that the money is spent.

They said, we looked at your books, we looked at what you said, we looked at your procedures, and, by taking a look at your procedures, we have reached the conclusion that we do not have a high degree of confidence that what you are reporting is actually the way that the money is being spent in the Department of Education. You have failed your audit.

The disappointing thing is that the Department of Education is one of only nine significant organizations in the Executive Branch that has been unable to get a clean audit. Other departments include the Department of Treasury, the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense, the Department of Agriculture, EPA, HUD, OPM and AID. Nine agencies cannot get a clean audit.

I came from the private sector, and I agree with something that the Vice President said in 1993, in a book that he prepared, he said creating a government that works better and costs less. It is a report of the National Performance Review, authored, or at least given credit to, by Vice President GORE. In this document he says, "In other words, if a publicly traded corporation kept its books the way the Federal Government does, the Securities and Exchange Commission would close it down immediately." It would close it down immediately.

Now, we are not going to do that with the Department of Education. We cannot do that with the Department of Education, and we do not want to do that with the Department of Education. But I do believe it is time for this Congress and I believe it is time for the American people to demand some accountability for the \$40 billion, some of the most important money that we spend in Washington, to demand some accountability to the Department of Education and say where is that money going and how are you spending it?

We do know that in an environment where the auditors say we cannot give you a clean audit, we do know that in the private sector, that sends off the red flags and sets off the alarm bells, and it says there is a reason to be concerned here, because if they do not have the proper procedures or they do not have the proper control mechanisms in place, what you have done is created an environment that is ripe for waste, fraud and abuse.

So over the last year we have gone back, along with General Accounting Office and the Inspector General at the Department of Education, and said is there any waste or fraud within the Department of Education? Help us explore what is going on within the Department of Education, to let us know whether there are examples of waste, fraud and abuse.

The disappointing thing is the answer has come back a resounding yes. Let me give you some examples.

The first one is not a big example, except that it dramatically impacted the lives of 39 young people in America. Congratulations, you are not a winner. As taxpayers in America and as the Federal Government, we have decided we are going to reward young people who excel by giving them a Jacob Javits scholarship, which pays for 4 years of graduate school. It recognizes their achievement and it recognizes the achievement of their undergraduate schools in preparing them for graduate work.

Earlier this year we notified 39 young people that they had won the Jacob Javits scholarship. Two days later, after these kids were excited, called home, called mom and dad and said, "Hey, we won, isn't that great," I just dropped my daughter off at college this fall and I can tell you how excited I would be if I knew she had won a 4-year scholarship. Parents were excited, the undergraduate schools were excited because it recognized they had been successful and they were being recognized for their contributions and their success. The only problem was, 2 days later the Department of Education had to call them back and say, sorry, we called the wrong 39 young people.

Failing proofreading. In September 1999, remember, this is an agency that has a \$100 billion loan portfolio, they send their forms out where kids apply for additional financial aid. 3.5 million forms printed, 3.5 million forms printed incorrectly. The taxpayers in America, young people, lose \$720,000.

Dead and loving it. The Department of Education, when they give loans, they recognize if a young person becomes disabled or if they pass away, that it would be unrealistic for us to expect to collect on that loan. We forgave \$77 million in student loans. That is good news for those young people. It is even better news when they recognize that they were not disabled and they had not died.

A theft ring within the Department of Education. Because they did not have the proper controls in place, they had a purchasing agent who could order electronic equipment, including a 61-inch color TV, including Gateway computers, including VCRs, printers and the like, ordered \$330,000 worth of equipment. She could certify that the materials had been received at the Department of Education, certify that

they should be paid for. Only one problem, they were not delivered to the Department of Education, they were delivered around to individual homes around the Washington, D.C. area. All done through the phone guy. What was in it for the phone guy? The phone guy got paid \$660,000 for overtime that he did not work.

We provide one other program that says we are going to help school districts that have a big Federal installation that kind of eats up their tax base, we call it Impact Aid. Again, because we do not have the computer security in place, this summer, when a school district was supposed to receive its Impact Aid funds, we had someone, we are not quite sure because it is still under investigation, but what we do know is \$1.9 million did not go to two schools on Indian reservations in South Dakota, but it went into personal accounts here in Washington, D.C., and in this case they were caught by the car guy.

The car salesman caught this, because an individual went in to a Chevy dealer here in Maryland, and they wanted to buy a Corvette. The alarm bells went off for the car salesman, because he did a credit check on the person buying the Corvette. The credit check did not balance out. The guy called the FBI, and, rather than getting a Corvette, the person trying to buy the Corvette ended up with a date with the FBI. That is how we found out; not through the procedures at the Department of Education, but because the car guy called the FBI and said this does not check out.

All of this is in a context today where we recognize we want to invest in our kids.

I am glad to see my colleague from Wisconsin has joined us.

Again, I am saying we do not want to not invest in our kids, but what we are saying is if we are going to invest in our kids, or if we are going to invest in other areas, whether it is in Treasury, Justice, Defense or Agriculture, let us make sure there is accountability. We need to make sure that when an American taxpayer sends their money to Washington, that we hold that money in trust for them and we spend the money wisely.

I will yield to my colleague from Wisconsin to talk a little bit about where we are going with spending programs, and perhaps some areas where we have some concerns.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I notice the gentleman is here talking about how a lot of the money coming to Washington through our Federal tax dollars is getting wasted, it is getting misappropriated, there is actual fraud involved. So I thought that would be a fitting topic to discuss, what is the future?

As we go into this coming election, it is very important, as we look at the

waste, the fraud and the abuse, of how our taxpayer dollars are being spent here in Washington, it is important to take a look at what our two Presidential candidates are proposing with respect to spending the surplus from now for the next decade when they actually are in the oval office.

I think it is important that we note, there is a huge surplus. It is not just a Social Security surplus. We have a giant non-Social Security surplus, almost over \$5 trillion, coming into Washington over the next 10 years. As we take a look at this surplus, we are going back to our districts, talking to our constituents. When I go home to Wisconsin, my constituents tell me, first pay off the national debt, stop raiding the Social Security trust fund, fix the problems we have with Medicare, and if we are still overpaying our taxes, make sure we can have some of our money back, rather than spending it on new money in Washington.

These are the priorities that I am hearing as I am traveling back, and I think a lot of people are seeing this around the country.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. If the gentleman will just yield, I think you are helping us get the language right. A lot of people in Washington are talking about this as a Washington surplus, meaning that this is Washington's money. I think the gentleman has been very careful to point out this is not a Washington surplus, but this is a tax surplus. We are collecting more in taxes than what we need to run the Federal Government, so this is an overtaxation. This is not just Washington's money.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. That is right. It is not Washington's money, it is America's money. As we take a look at this, let us take a look at the two different proposals being pushed right now by the two different Presidential candidates. I have here sort of an apples to apples comparison of the Gore budget and the Bush budget plan for America, should either of these two men become President of the United States.

When you take a look at the Gore budget, and this chart shows the surplus dollar, how each candidate plans to divide up every dollar of surplus coming from taxpayers to Washington. Well, it is not a question of whether you cut taxes or pay down the national debt; it is now a question of whether you cut taxes or spend the money in Washington.

Take a look at the pie over to my right, which is the Gore budget. Of every single surplus dollar, Vice President GORE is proposing to spend 46 cents, 46 cents of every surplus dollar coming from income tax overpayments, to be spent in Washington on new government programs on these Federal agencies. That is compared to George Bush's plan to spend 6 cents, 6

cents, of every surplus dollar in Washington on other programs here on Federal agencies.

It is a huge difference. It is \$2.1 trillion, about half of the surplus, the Vice President is proposing to keep in Washington and spend on government agencies, compared to Governor Bush's plan to spend \$278 billion.

But it goes beyond that. Mr. Bush has often been criticized for not paying down the debt. Nothing could be further from the truth. If you take a look Governor Bush's plan, he is actually dedicating 58 cents of the surplus dollar for the next 10 years towards shoring up Social Security and Medicare and paying off our national debt, to the tune of we will pay off the national debt in 12 years.

Vice President GORE? He says not so much should go to debt reduction, Social Security and Medicare. He wants to dedicate 36 cents of the surplus dollar toward those goals.

Where is the difference? Mr. Bush is proposing 29 cents of our surplus dollar to go back to the people it came from, the taxpayers; by eliminating the marriage tax penalty, by eliminating the death tax, by making health care more affordable through health care tax cuts, those kinds of things, making the tax code fairer for all Americans.

The Vice President is proposing a net tax cut of 7 cents, meaning Americans are projected to send a lot of extra money over to pay their taxes for the next 10 years, to the tune of about \$5 trillion. The Vice President is saying, let us give them 7 cents on the dollar back, and we will keep the money in Washington; 46 cents we will keep and spend, we will dedicate 36 cents to paying off the debt, shoring up Social Security and Medicare.

It is a completely different vision than what Governor Bush is proposing. He is saying his number one priority in the budget, pay down the debt, shore up Social Security and Medicare. Then, if people are still overpaying their taxes, give them their money back by reducing their tax bite. Take less out of the paychecks in Washington, rather than spending the money in Washington, which is precisely what Vice President GORE is proposing.

If you take a look the sum of the totals, as we examine these Federal agencies, the waste and the fraud and abuse that is occurring in these Federal agencies, Vice President GORE wants to fuel the flames. He wants to spend \$2.1 trillion of the hard-earned surplus in Washington on new programs and other Federal agencies.

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Compared to Bush's proposal to spend \$278 billion. So it is not a question of paying off the debt or cutting taxes. It is a question of paying off the debt, reducing taxes, or spending the money in Washington. And I think if

our constituents were faced with a choice of, after we pay off the debt, do we want to keep the money in Washington or do we want to have it back in our pocket, we think the people want to have it back in their pocket, and that is what the Bush plan is.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, we have been joined by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER). Put the chart back up that talks about the 6 cents in new spending that Governor Bush is talking about versus the 45 cents that the Vice President is talking about. The one thing that I think we have recognized, and the gentleman from Colorado served on the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations with me, we believe that there is tremendous leverage in the money that we are already spending, that there are ways to reform the way that we are spending the money.

Again, as an example, the Department of Education could get much more of a bang for our buck. And maybe the gentleman from Colorado would care to comment on some of the reforms that we are proposing, besides just being able to audit the books. I would think that just by having a clean set of books and knowing where our money is going, we could leverage significantly. But also the programs and the plans that we have, Straight A's, Dollars to the Classroom, regulatory flexibility.

I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, spending the money that the taxpayers send to Washington more wisely is always a goal, and a goal to which Republicans seem to be more deeply devoted to than our friends on the Democrat side of the aisle. We can see that from the budget suggestions made by the two presidential candidates. Vice President GORE would propose to spend more money. We contend that we can meet many of the needs that the Vice President has in mind, but we can do it not by spending more of the people's money; we can do it by spending the money we currently do spend more wisely, and spend it in a way that is much smarter.

Before I get to some of the specifics on how we can do that in education, I want to point out the overall impact, not just on how we divvy up these two equivalent pies of projected surplus revenue, but there is also a secondary impact we have to consider and that is the impact on the economy. Because spending more and more money in Washington, D.C., really is not the best way to stimulate positive economic growth. That is really the second part of the story.

The point is the tax relief. If we really can reduce taxes on the American people by 29 cents, versus the measly 7 cents that the Vice President has proposed, what we know is that Americans

do something better than government with money. They spend it wisely. They invest it wisely. They create more jobs. They create more wealth. And that is what we learned throughout economic history in America.

Tax relief actually allows us to pay down debt more quickly and allows us to do it in a more powerful way where Americans enjoy more freedom. So we want to do what Americans do all the time with their family budgets, and that is count every penny.

The gentleman mentioned the U.S. Department of Education.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I was going to mention, and neither one of my colleagues here today were here in 1993. I had the pleasure of serving my first year here in 1993, and other than that little blue sliver that is on the Gore plan of tax relief of 7 cents, the rest of it or the biggest chunk of it looks very much like the Clinton plan of 1993.

If my colleagues remember, if they were watching Washington, one of the most sought-after committees in 1993 was Committee on Public Works and Transportation, because the President came in and said we are in an economic crisis here. We have got to what? We have got to raise taxes so that there is more money here in Washington, and then we have to spend it because we can spend it more wisely.

I think there is a quote to that effect in Buffalo.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I am very familiar with this quote because I think it goes to the different philosophies that are being represented here in Washington.

Two weeks after the President came right behind the gentleman there and gave the State of the Union address last year, where he talked about how we are going to use the government surplus, he went to Buffalo, New York, and talked to a packed crowd of tens of thousands of people. He said, with respect to the government surplus, the people's surplus, he said, quote, "We could give you your money back, but we would not be sure that you would spend it right," end quote.

Well, therein lies the philosophy. The people's money is spent right, so long as they spend their own money. The belief here in Washington, shared by President Clinton and Vice President GORE, is that we here in Washington know how to spend the people's money better than they do. There is a different school of thought; there is a different philosophy which we share that people know how to spend their own money better. People know how to take care of their children, their grandparents, their parents much better than some distant bureaucrats in Washington do.

So these two pie charts here, the visions, the blueprints about how to

divvy up the surplus, they are more than just numbers, more than just budgets. They are twin visions. They are two different visions.

The Gore vision here on how to treat the surplus is to spend the bulk of the money in Washington. Spend the bulk of our families' budgets in Washington on more programs, on more agencies so that Washington can try and come up with a solution to solve the problems in our lives.

The different vision, the Bush vision proposed in the Bush plan is to pay down our debts so our children and grandchildren can inherit a debt-free Nation from our efforts. And as people are still overpaying their taxes, here is the critical part, do not think that Washington can spend money better than people can. Give people their money back and make the Tax Code much more fair and simpler so that they can move on and live and grow businesses and raise their families.

So the vision here is very stark. It is very different. The Gore vision: spend the money in Washington, keep it in Washington, pay off the debt at a slower pace. If we actually add these numbers up, this \$2.1 trillion spending increase that the Vice President is proposing, it is the largest proposed spending increase in the Federal Government in 30 years. Not since Lyndon Johnson has a spending increase been proposed. It is so large that if we add it all up, it forces the Vice President to go and raid the Social Security trust fund by \$906 billion. He spends so much money, it is over \$906 billion.

The answer then is either dip into Social Security or raise taxes if we want to satisfy all of the Vice President's spending desires. That is not what the Bush plan is doing. That is not what we are trying to get done. Pay off the debt, shore up Social Security and Medicare, and as people are continuing to overpay their taxes, give them their money back rather than spend it on new programs in Washington. That is the difference in visions that these two alternatives present.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, again reclaiming my time, I think my colleague from Colorado is going to talk a little bit about the difference in vision on education, which I think is very much the same thing. What we see here in front of us is one that is a Washington-based plan versus one that says we are going to take care of business here in Washington, which is paying down the debt.

But other than that, we are going to give the money back to the American people who sent it here in the first place. We are going to trust them. I think it is very similar to the differences that we have here envisioned in where we are going to go with education.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Start with our Dollars to the Classroom philosophy and the legislation that we have pushed as one of our top education priorities and let us use that example by comparing how an American taxpayer would spend their money versus how Washington currently spends its money on education today.

If a taxpayer, who is represented by the blue sections of the chart, and where we think surplus money ought to go, versus the Vice President, which is next to nothing, let us suppose that taxpayer would want to budget that tax savings for a new washing machine. That family would expect that 100 percent of the money they budget for the washing machine would go to the actual purchase of the washing machine.

But in Washington when we say education is a high priority, somehow people in Washington are just content to see only 60 percent of the money budgeted for education actually ever make it to a classroom. Now that is a huge distinction in how Americans view fiscal responsibility versus how government views fiscal responsibility. Republicans have a different way.

Clinton and GORE, they have been in the White House now for 8 years. They have had their opportunity to try to use the money that the Americans have sent here and spend it wisely, and we share their sincerity that we want to help children. But we are not for all the waste that for 8 years they have been willing to endure and sustain.

Sixty percent out of every education dollar is all that makes it to a child's classroom. Our goal is to tell the Department of Education, "We do not care how difficult it is. We do not care about your silly rules, your silly regulations, your old ways of doing business, the status quo over there in that nice office building. We demand that 95 percent of every dollar spent on education get to a child, get to a classroom. We will give you the 5 percent for overhead and administrative costs." That is what most other charities spend for overhead. The Federal Government ought to be held to the same standard that Americans insist on on a day-by-day basis.

Wasting cash, hemorrhaging money, maybe that is the way the Clinton-Gore regime is inclined to spend money and they feel comfortable with that. We have a different way, and we are fortunate that we have a governor in Texas that has shown real leadership and he will join us, given the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I think we know how and why we lose 45 to 60 cents when we create a program here in Washington. There have been hundreds since we have been here. They were here when we got here, but there are hundreds of programs.

We have to tell a local school district that, hey, we have a program for this to buy computers, a technology program. So we pass a program. The Education Department has to notify these school districts. These school districts then have to apply for the money. So they have to go through the process of filling out these forms. We then have the people within the Department of Education who sort these applications out and say this group over here gets them and, sorry, you do not. So we send a check to this local school district.

That local school district then has to track that money. So if it is coming in for technology, they have to segregate that money, they have got to make sure that it is spent on computers and nothing else, technology. They then send the forms back to the Department of Education and say, yes, we spent it on exactly what this program was for. And then the Department of Education knows that they cannot trust those people at the local level, so they send their auditors in to make sure that the way the money was reported spent is actually the way the money was spent.

It is kind of interesting, I have talked to some of my school districts who have gone through an audit by the Department of Education. They say it is absolutely brutal. They have to document every penny, every dime, and all of this. And these are the people that know our kids' names. And they are going through this process when we have a Department of Education that cannot keep its own books here in Washington.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, it is an unfortunate tragedy that in 1998, the U.S. Department of Education could not audit its books. We are concerned now about the inability of the Department to pass an audit of their Department. But in 1998, the books were so poorly managed, the finances were so badly mismanaged, that they could not even audit the books. The documents were not even in an auditable state, let alone letting us get to the point of finding out where the money really went.

We have managed to improve things slightly, only so that we know now that the U.S. Department of Education fails those audits when we can actually sit down and add the money up.

So our goal is for financial accountability and responsibility. We want to manage the funds that are spent today. If we can get that 40 cents back that today is squandered and wasted and misdirected away from children's classrooms, we do not need the new spending. We can actually increase the amount of money spent on children without increasing one dime, the amount of money budgeted for education, just by cutting out the waste fraud and abuse in the Department of Education.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I have an education advisory board which consists of parents, teachers, school board members, administrators, superintendents from all around southern Wisconsin; and I am always asking them for ideas, asking them what kinds of reforms do they think Washington needs to make their job better, to help them improve the quality of education in southern Wisconsin.

Does my colleague know what they always say? Get off of our backs. The fact that Washington only sends 6 cents of the education dollar that is spent on education in all of our school districts, but promulgates over 50 percent of the regulations is astounding. Six cents on the dollar come from Washington; 94 cents on average are coming from local property taxes and local and State money. Yet over half of the unfunded mandates are imposed from Washington on our local school districts.

What astounds me is that just in my area of Wisconsin that I come from, we have school districts that have very interesting and unique problems. Racine, Wisconsin, has school district problems that are so unique to those in Beloit, Wisconsin, or those in Janesville, Wisconsin, but let alone the problems that may exist in Harlem or in Los Angeles or in New Mexico. In this kind of country, in a vast and differing Nation, to subject our school districts to one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter solutions where we give them a little bit of the money, but all of the mandates. It is strangling our schools and strangling innovation.

I see that we are running out of time, but I think it is very important to point out they do not have all the answers in Washington. And in fact when we try to inflict these answers on our local school districts, we are doing more harm than good in many cases.

□ 1530

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. RYAN) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFER) for joining me this afternoon. I mean there are two different visions here; there is a Washington-based vision and there is a local vision. We are focused on the local vision.

REGARDING UNSUBSTANTIATED SENSATIONAL ALLEGATIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, we have a responsibility to exercise oversight over a wide range of issues. This is one of our most fundamental obligations, and it includes investigating potential problems, both in the executive branch and the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, along with that responsibility comes extraordinary power. We have the power to require citizens to come before us and respond to detailed questions about their lives. We have the power to require citizens to provide us with their most sensitive personal information, including their bank records, telephone logs and diaries.

And when we make allegations about the conduct of citizens, our statements are broadcast on television and radio and printed in newspapers all across the country. We thus have the power to permanently tarnish individuals' reputations. So it is essential that when we fulfill our responsibilities to investigate, we investigate responsibly and be accountable for what we do.

When we make a serious charge about an individual's conduct, we should be certain of the accuracy of our accusation. If we later learn of information that refutes that charge, we ought to correct the record. And when we harm individuals by making charges that are wrong, we ought to apologize.

Wen Ho Lee has been in the news a lot recently. Many Members of Congress have been justly critical of the irreparable damage that has been done to his reputation. No one should be subject to unfounded smears by government officials. But, unfortunately, over the past several years, a pattern has emerged in which Members of Congress have done just that.

Members of Congress have repeatedly made sensational public allegations against individual American citizens. Many of these initial allegations have received widespread coverage in the media. Further investigation, however, often has shown that the allegations are unsupported by the facts. And when the facts eventually do emerge, the news media inevitably gives little attention to the truth, and the public record is rarely corrected.

Let me give you an example: In June 1997, former Representative Gerald Solomon, the chairman of the House Rules Committee claimed he had "evidence" from a government source that John Huang, the former Commerce Department official and Democratic National Committee fund-raiser, had "committed economic espionage and breached our national security."

This allegation of espionage was very serious. It amounted to a claim of treason, the most serious accusation that can be brought against an American. It was reported on national television and in newspapers across the country.

But it turns out that that allegation was based on nothing more than gossip at a reception. When the FBI interviewed Mr. Solomon about this allegation, he told the FBI that he was told by a Senate staffer at a Capitol Hill reception that the staffer "received confirmation, that a Department of Commerce employee had passed classified information to a foreign government."

According to the FBI interview notes, the Senate staffer did not say that the employee was John Huang, nor did he say that information went to China. Representative Solomon did not know who the staffer was.

In a second interview with the FBI, Representative Solomon recalled that what the staffer said to him was, "Congressman, you might like to know that you were right there was someone at Commerce giving out information."

Again, in this interview, Representative Solomon told the FBI that he did not know the name of the staffer who made this comment. In fact, the only way Mr. Solomon could identify the staffer was to describe him as "a male in his 30s or 40s, approximately 5 feet, 10 inches tall with brownish hair."

Mr. Speaker, here is another example: In June 1999, Representative DAN BURTON issued a press release accusing Defense Department officials, including Colonel Raymond A. Willson of attempting to tamper with the computer of a committee witness, Dr. Peter Leitner, of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, sometimes known as DTRA.

Mr. BURTON alleged, "While Dr. Leitner was telling my committee about the retaliation he suffered for bringing his concerns to his superiors and Congress, his supervisor was trying to secretly access his computer. This smacks of mob tactics." He further commented, "George Orwell couldn't have dreamed this up."

But Colonel Willson did not tamper with Dr. Leitner's computer; both the committee and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations conducted investigations and found that Colonel Willson had done nothing improper.

It turns out that the incident at issue was nothing more than a routine effort to obtain files in the witness' computer that were necessary to complete an already overdue project.

I regret to say that I am unaware of any public apology by Mr. BURTON or Mr. Solomon for making these sensational allegations about Colonel Willson or Mr. Huang.

Now, it is true that Mr. Huang has admitted involvement in conduit campaign contributions between 1992 and 1994, but Members of Congress should be accountable for their allegations regardless of whether the individual targeted has committed other wrongdoings.

There have been many others who have been the target of unsubstantiated claims by Members of Congress, and who have yet to receive a public apology. Many of these allegations have focused on individuals in the administration. I believe that this pattern reflects a significant abuse of the serious powers that have been entrusted to us.

I asked my staff to compile a report on unsubstantiated sensational allegations that have been made over the